



Department of Veterans Affairs

Black Hills National Cemetery
20901 Pleasant Valley Drive
Sturgis, SD 57785

Media Advisory

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:
William Haggerty, Director
605-347-3830

May 14, 2012

Black Hills National Cemetery Memorial Day Program

- What:** A Memorial Day Program to remember and honor all military members who fell while defending the ideals, beliefs, and values that Americans hold sacred.
- Who:** Keynote Speaker: Governor Dennis Daugaard
- When:** May 28, 2011 at 11:00 (Traditional Service) and 1:00 (Native American Service)
- Where:** Black Hills National Cemetery
Committal Shelter
- Contact:** Bill Haggerty, Cemetery Director
Office: 605-347-3830

Black Hills National Cemetery will observe Memorial Day on Monday, May 28, 2012. There will be two ceremonies held at Cemetery's Committal Shelter to memorialize all those who answered the call, and made the ultimate sacrifice, in defense of our great Nation.

Visitors may visit and place flowers on graves of those they loved and lost all weekend long.

Our theme is "Never Forget, Ever Honor" Please join us for these services as Veterans stand beside each other remembering their fallen comrades.

The Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe and the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Department of South Dakota, will be the hosts of the Memorial Day Services.

The Traditional Ceremony, sponsored by the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Department of South Dakota, will be held at 11:00 a.m. Guest speakers will include Governor Dennis Daugaard and Col. Mark Weatherington, Commander of the 28th Bomb Wing at Ellsworth Air Force Base. The Sturgis High School Band will perform the National Anthem.

The Native American Ceremony, sponsored by Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe, will be held at 1:00 p.m. Note that this is a change from previous years.

The general public is invited to bring lawn chairs or blankets to sit on or they may sit on the bleachers. Plan to come early and attend the ceremonies. Please call (605) 347-3830 with questions.

Background: Memorial Day is a federal holiday observed on the last Monday of May (May 28 in 2012). Formerly known as Decoration Day, it commemorates U.S. soldiers who died while in the

military service. First enacted to honor Union and Confederate soldiers following the American Civil War, it was extended after World War I to honor Americans who have died in all wars.

The preferred name for the holiday gradually changed from "Decoration Day" to "Memorial Day", which was first used in 1882. It did not become more common until after World War II, and was not declared the official name by Federal law until 1967. On June 28, 1968, the Congress passed the Uniform Holidays Bill, which moved three holidays from their traditional dates to a specified Monday in order to create a convenient three-day weekend. The holidays included Washington's Birthday, Veterans Day and Memorial Day. The change moved Memorial Day from its traditional May 30 date to the last Monday in May. The law took effect at the federal level in 1971.

Many Americans observe Memorial Day by visiting cemeteries and memorials. A national moment of remembrance takes place at 3 p.m. local time. Another tradition is to fly the flag of the United States at half-staff from dawn until noon local time.

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